

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARAMA 00288 100321Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

NSAE-00 SIL-01 L-03 SCCT-01 SY-05 DODE-00 PA-01

USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /049 W
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P 091918Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2525

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 0288

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EMIN, NS

SUBJ: LABOR TROUBLE AT SURALCO

1. ABOUT A WEEK AGO SURALCO CAME TO AGREEMENT FOR NEW LABOR CONTRACT WITH TWO SEPARATE LABOR UNIONS REPRESENTING INSTALLATIONS AT MOENGO AND PARANAM. AGREEMENTS REQUIRED RATIFICATION BY RESPECTIVE MEMBERSHIPS. MOENGO UNION RATIFIED AGREEMENT BUT TROUBLE HAS DEVELOPED AT PARANAM. AFTER CONSIDERABLE EFFORTS DURING WEEK BY UNION LEADERSHIP TO PRODUCE RATIFICATION, LEADERSHIP HAS APPARENTLY CONCLUDED IT WILL NOT SUCCEED AND IS LIKELY TO RESIGN IN NEXT DAY OR TWO. IF THAT HAPPENS, UNION WILL BE LEFT WITH NEITHER CONTRACT NOR LEADERSHIP AND SURALCO FEARS SITUATION WILL DETERIORATE RAPIDLY INTO VIOLENCE.

2. SURALCO MANAGING DIRECTOR HAS SEEN PRIME MINISTER ARRON AND ASKED FOR PROTECTION FOR FACILITIES IN CASE OF STRIKE. IT WILL BE RECALLED THAT VIOLENCE ERUPTED AT PARANAM INSTALLATION LAST FALL OVER ISSUE OF REDUNDANT WORKERS, WITH DESTRUCTION OF OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND HOLDING OF LOCAL HOSTAGES (NO AMERICANS) FOR SOME HOURS.

3. THIS SITUATION IS PARTICULARLY UNFORTUNATE IN WAKE OF SUCCESSFUL GOS-ALCOA NEGOTIATIONS EARLIER THIS WEEK. IF PLANTS ARE STRUCK AND HAVE TO CLOSE DOWN, THIS MAY MAKE IT
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IMPOSSIBLE FOR SURALCO TO MEET AGREED PRODUCTION LEVELS WITH

CONSEQUENT LOSS OF LEVY FUNDS TO GOS, A FACT WHICH SURALCO HAS
POINTED OUT TO GOVERNMENT.

4. AMBASSADOR HAS REQUESTED APPOINTMENT WITH PRIME MINISTER
AT EARLIEST CONVENIENCE TO REITERATE EXPECTATION THAT GOS
WILL PROVIDE POLICE PROTECTION FOR AMERICAN PROPERTY AND PERSONS
IN EVENT OF TROUBLE.
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Message Attributes

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